



ST. STEPHEN'S
EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL - 1958

Head of School Search

July 1, 2024

St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School
3439 Main Highway
Coconut Grove, FL 33133
sseds.org



The
Education
Group



THE POSITION

St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School thrives as one of the Miami area's most highly regarded independent schools.

It is known for its diverse and engaged student body, a talented faculty, devoted families, and an incredible location in the Coconut Grove neighborhood along the shores of Biscayne Bay.

SSEDS seeks an inspiring and experienced leader to build on the remarkable success of its retiring Head of School, Silvia Larrauri. The school enjoys steady enrollment numbers in a highly competitive market, a strong financial position, and an exceptional reputation. The next Head will be strongly attracted to the school's mission, its commitment to its Episcopal identity and relationship to the parish, the education of young learners, important Board initiatives, and taking advantage of its prime location in Miami.

St. Stephen's seeks a leader who will provide students with a strong academic and spiritual foundation within a warm, loving Episcopal community. A successful candidate will be a leader in PreK - Grade 5 education and demonstrate exceptional interpersonal and communication skills. Qualified candidates should have senior level administrative experience, a strong record of professional achievement, and experience with strategic planning and board initiatives.

The Head will be responsible for leading and overseeing all aspects of the school and working closely with the Rector, the Board of Trustees, and the Vestry of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, with the hope of building a common sense of community between the two institutions. Experience as a spiritual leader of a school will be an asset, and the new Head will be expected to collaborate closely with the Rector in deepening and promoting the Episcopal identity of the school.





THE SCHOOL

History

For 65 years, St. Stephen's, affectionately called The Little School by the Bay, has provided students with an excellent educational experience, rich in academics and grounded in service and faith. The school was inspired by a group of parishioners, who envisioned a nurturing community school that combined academic excellence with a strong commitment to values and morals. In September 1958, St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School held its first classes, the realization of a dream that started years earlier by parish families and its clergy. Since the school's inception, school and church leaders have been committed to providing a learning environment that emphasizes high academic standards, strong spiritual values, and the partnership between the home, the church, and the school.

There is a history of cooperation and collaboration among the Rector and Vestry, the Board Chair, the School Board, and the Head of School. The Board respects the head of school and is committed to planning processes for the future well-being of the school. Many board members have relationships with the church and a clear desire to continue a positive partnership with the church. It is common, within the school and the church, to view St. Stephen's as one community, with two different but complementary missions.

The school continues to be governed as originally created, with the Rector, Wardens, and Vestry delegating general oversight of the school to its Board of Trustees and leadership. The school administration in turn manages the school's activities. Owned and operated by the parish, the school continues to be one of the church's primary outreach programs. There is significant representation of the church on the board, and parents also have representation. In this way, the parish, school, and parents all have an opportunity to carry out the mission of the school and the church.





THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Approaches to Learning

The faculty and staff of St. Stephen's are known for their innovative approaches to learning. They are strongly committed to continuous professional development that enhances evidence-based and innovative teaching practices and methodologies that advance the school's mission and provide unparalleled learning experiences for students.

St. Stephen's believes that a foundation for lifelong learning is established at an early age. The educational program offers opportunities for growth across all grade levels and focuses on each individual child's mental, physical, and spiritual development. Combining small class sizes with a unique, hands-on curriculum, St. Stephen's gives each student personalized and caring attention. The recent implementation of a three-teacher co-teaching model at each grade level allows for greater differentiation in addressing various skills and needs.

St. Stephen's prioritizes innovation and forward-thinking approaches to teaching and learning. Teachers are committed to differentiating instruction in terms of ability, interests, and needs in order best to ensure the academic success of students. In offering an array of activities from service learning to athletics, students remain engaged and excited about learning.





THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The youngest students (Pre-Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten) begin their learning journey in a nurturing, play-based environment, developing their natural curiosity and creative expression through the arts. Students develop their communication skills through purposeful play and collaboration with peers. Children explore patterns, sizes, and shapes through contextual themes, stories, problem-solving, and manipulatives. Talented teachers provide hands-on lessons filled with exploration, creative art projects, music, and kinesthetic movement to develop each child's uniqueness.

In Senior Kindergarten to Grade 2, learners continue to build on foundational curricular concepts while teachers provide an experiential context for learning. Each child's strengths, challenges, individual interest, and emotional well-being are highly valued. Teachers make learning meaningful, promote creativity and inquiry, and encourage natural curiosity about the world. Students develop a love for literacy as faculty members guide them through research-based approaches. There is also a strong focus on building communication skills, students' mathematical understanding evolves as they learn to articulate their analytical reasoning and approaches to problem-solving. Moreover, thematic units offer opportunities to combine disciplines, providing a holistic education that sparks curiosity and makes learning fun.





THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

St. Stephen's elementary curriculum (Grades 3 to 5) is rooted in constantly evolving teaching practices, and it provides a rigorous and thorough education while stimulating the creative mind. Teachers facilitate student-centered opportunities for exploration and problem-solving, both independently and collaboratively. Students are empowered to become positive leaders, develop their self-confidence, and to become contributing members of our community and beyond. They also connect deeply with mathematics in various ways through a combination of innovative and traditional strategies to help students gain mastery of basic skills. Students develop flexibility of thought and are constantly encouraged to think critically and creatively. This leads naturally to in-depth analysis of text and research-based projects.





THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Technology

In addition to the innovative approach to teaching, St. Stephen's is recognized globally for their commitment to technology integration. At St. Stephen's, faculty members continuously adapt to the evolving digital landscape and leverage technology to provide innovative educational experiences that prepare students for success. Their approach to learning emphasizes intentionality, integration, and a focus on meaningful experiences, resulting in unparalleled learning opportunities for all students. Equipped with a Learning Management System (Google Classroom, Seesaw), Apple devices, and Apple pencils, faculty, staff, and students find solutions that otherwise would not be possible. Students develop an extensive digital toolkit, equipping them to meet their unique educational needs.

Students and teachers at St. Stephen's participate in an innovative program, Design Studio, integrating computational thinking, engineering, and digital literacy into the curriculum. Intentional experiences and integration with other subject areas allow for empowered learning experiences while navigating technology use responsibly and effectively.

The school has been recognized for the third consecutive time as an Apple Distinguished School. These institutions are centers of innovation, leadership, and educational excellence, using Apple technology to inspire creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking in learning and teaching. Distinguished Apple teachers include 85% of the faculty at St. Stephen's.





THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Library/Media Center

During weekly visits to the Library/Media Center, students learn library skills and research techniques. They are also encouraged to read for pleasure and research through special programs, book talks, and storytelling.

Spanish

The Spanish language program at St. Stephen's is a core subject for preschool through grade 5. Students in the Spanish-as-a-foreign-language track focus on developing their conversational and writing skills while exploring Spanish-speaking cultures. For native Spanish speakers, the program provides an opportunity to enhance their literacy skills while deepening their understanding of their cultural heritage. Experienced teachers tailor their instruction to meet the needs of each student.

Performing and Visual Arts

The performing and visual arts program is integral to students' experience at St. Stephen's. Through music, art, and drama, students see the world with new eyes, think critically, ask questions, and learn with all their senses. The arts provide the opportunity for ideas to morph magically into beauty and for mindsets to shift and expand exponentially.





CORNERSTONES OF THE SCHOOL



The Mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School

Believing that every child is created in God's image, we exist to educate and inspire children to lead by example and become forces for good in the world.

Service Learning

St. Stephen's students have opportunities to explore the meaning and importance of service-learning, outreach, and compassion. Every student, family, and faculty member is a part of the Helping Hands initiative.

Involvement varies from in-school, curriculum-based projects to after-school grade-level projects and school-wide campaigns. The projects are thoughtfully selected to encourage creativity, promote empathy, and improve community relations. Grade level projects relate to the curriculum and benefit a variety of non-profits, including Casa Valentina, Florida Environmental Projects, St. Alban's Head Start Literacy Project, the Children's Homeless Society, and an Animal Shelter Drive connected to Blessing of the Animals Day.





CORNERSTONES OF THE SCHOOL

Arts and Innovation

The Arts and Innovation Center is the newest building on the St. Stephen's campus, offering students hands-on, real-world experiences in STEM fields, including science, engineering, the Design Process, computational thinking, performing and visual arts, and music. With a focus on collaboration, students have opportunities to engage in meaningful and intentional projects that enhance their creativity and critical thinking skills.

The Flag Salute

Every morning, the St. Stephen's school day begins with Flag Salute. For nearly 60 years, the school community gathers to share stories, celebrate birthdays, and recite pledges in the courtyard. This ritual is a lovely way to begin each day, with smiling students and faculty warmly greeting each other. Parents are encouraged to join the ceremony, and at the end, everyone recites the Student Covenant, Pledge to the Cross, the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pledge to the Earth.





CORNERSTONES OF THE SCHOOL

Episcopal Identity

Key to St. Stephen's mission and identity is its rootedness in the tradition and values of Episcopal schools. Founded by St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, whose grounds it shares with the school, the connection with the parish is maintained through governance, worship in the church, and the strong relationship the school maintains with the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida. St. Stephen's has also been a leader in support of and involvement with the National Association of Episcopal Schools.

Key to its understanding of itself as an Episcopal school is its commitment to diversity and inclusion, as demonstrated in the wide variety of religious traditions represented in the student body. It maintains a strong commitment to service learning and in outreach to the larger Miami community. In recent years the school has enhanced its commitment to inclusion, justice, and equity, both within the school community and beyond.

A full-time chaplain leads weekly chapel services, provides pastoral care to students, their families, faculty, and staff. The weekly gathering in chapel represents the heart of the school's understanding of itself as a community. The spiritual life of St. Stephen's, including chapel services and Sacred Studies/Godly Play classes, is under the oversight of the Rector of the Church, who also celebrates the Eucharist for the school community on a regular basis and approves all Sacred Studies teachers conducting classes in the school. Class assignments, scheduling, and daily management of teachers are done by the Head of School.





THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Teaching at St. Stephen's

The faculty at St. Stephen's believe that transformative learning starts with knowing and loving students. These talented educators take their responsibility seriously and are mindful of the trust they are offered by the school. St. Stephen's faculty members strive to develop students' natural curiosity with the goal that they become lifelong learners.

Administration

St. Stephen's has a dedicated administration team. The Head of School is supported by the Assistant Head of School, Admission Director, and Business Manager. This team works collaboratively to manage the day-to-day schedule, activities, operations, and programming.

Parents

The St. Stephen's School and Home Association (SHA) is responsible for promoting and facilitating volunteer programs at the school. The SHA provides opportunities for parents to have an active and appropriate role in the school community. Working closely with the Head of School and staff, SHA is responsive to the needs of the school while using the school's mission as its guiding principle.

Governance

A Board of Trustees, made up of current parents and St. Stephen's parishioners, works with the Head to chart the strategic direction of the school and forward its advancement efforts. It plays an important role as an advisory council. Along with the church vestry, Trustees engage in regular board training sessions and is fully supportive of the administrative leadership of the school.





ST. STEPHEN'S FAST FACTS

SCHOOL



- **Established:** 1958
- **Grades:** PK – 5
- **Average Class Size:** 20
- **Enrollment 322 (2022-2023)**
 - **PK:** 32
 - **JK:** 32
 - **SK:** 43
 - **Gr. 1:** 44
 - **Gr. 2:** 43
 - **Gr. 3:** 42
 - **Gr. 4:** 42
 - **Gr. 5:** 44
- **Boys:** 182
- **Girls:** 140
- **Student/Teacher Ratio:** 7:1
- **Students Non-Hispanic White:** 20%
- **Students African American:** 20%
- **Students Hispanic White:** 49%

FACULTY + STAFF



- **Full-time faculty/staff:** 67
- **Advanced degrees:** 31
- **Average years of experience:** 13.8 yrs
- **Average years at St. Stephen's:** 9.1 yrs

TUITION



- **Tuition:** \$35,000
- **Endowment:** \$3M
- **Financial Reserves:** \$6M in operation and strategic reserves
- **Operating Budget:** \$10.2M (2021)
- **Annual Fund:** \$474,921 (2022-2023)
 - 100% participation
- **Financial Aid Budget:** \$330,000

Memberships & Accreditation



SOUTH FLORIDA
COLLABORATIVE CHAPTER



Florida Association for the
Education of Young Children



National Association
of Independent Schools



Living in Miami

Miami is a vibrant city, one of the most diverse communities in the country, with rich cultural influences from all around the world, especially Latin America. Many of the city's residents have emigrated, or are born to parents who emigrated, from countries in the Caribbean and Central and South America. With proximity to these areas, a unique culture inspired by its climate and current economic upswing, Miami is a true international city and major hub for finance, commerce, media, entertainment, and the arts. Along with its favorable weather, the rapidly expanding cultural scene draws families to the city. Two national parks, Biscayne National Park and the Everglades, along with five professional sports teams and a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities keep everyone active while living in Miami.

The Community of Coconut Grove

St. Stephen's is located in the heart of Coconut Grove, a historic Miami neighborhood along the shores of Biscayne Bay. One of the first established neighborhoods in Miami, Coconut Grove melds an eclectic history with a modern vibe, creating a hub for food, art, and culture. [VR1] From its idyllic waterfront on Biscayne Bay to quaint walking streets lined with lush parks, sidewalk cafes, a marina, unique boutiques, the village is a prime place to experience the fullness of life in South Florida. While 74% of St. Stephen's families reside in Coconut Grove and neighboring Coral Gables, 16% live in Key Biscayne, and the remaining families make their homes in Brickell/Downtown, Miami Beach, Pinecrest, Palmetto Bay, and Downtown and South Miami.





THE CHURCH

Welcome from the Bishop

I am delighted to endorse this profile in search of a new Head for Saint Stephen's Episcopal Day School, one of our 19 exceptional Episcopal schools in the Diocese of Southeast Florida. As the bishop, I am committed to the flourishing of all our schools, and I believe that our schools ministry is one of the most important things we do.

For several years we have been building an intentional community among our schools in our diocese, so that we may support and learn from each other. The leadership of our schools, including the clergy and heads of the schools, meet monthly during the academic year, and this community has proved vital during the pandemic and in the face of other challenges that regularly emerge as together we continue to provide a unique and exceptional education to our young people. Every two years or so, we gather in person for a joint professional development day, and this too has been a tremendous encouragement.

We believe that it is our Episcopal identity that makes our schools unique in the educational marketplace. While there are many other fine schools in the region, none offer this commitment to a distinctive religious and spiritual tradition that has shaped so much of our English-speaking world in the past, and which continues to inspire, shape, and support our school communities in the present day.

As we seek to appoint both a new Rector and a new Head of School, Saint Stephen's Church and Day School is on the cusp of an exciting new chapter in their common life as a church and school engaged in a collaborative mission. I hope that this profile will encourage you to explore whether you might be a candidate to be our next Head of School and join us in this work.

With every blessing,

The Rt. Rev. Peter Eaton
Episcopal Bishop of Southeast Florida





QUALITIES AND QUALIFICATIONS

Professional Qualities

- **Relationship builder** – strength in building relationships with school constituents and the greater community;
- **Academic leader** – experience in recruiting, inspiring, mentoring, and supporting faculty;
- **Strategic thinker** – experience with strategic and long-range planning with the ability to envision, obtain financial support for, and implement new strategic approaches;
- **Business planner** – demonstrates financial acumen with proven experience in overseeing and managing a school budget at a school;
- **Spiritual facilitator** – values a strong relationship between the church and school, knows how to uphold and promote Episcopal identity, and is eager to collaborate with the Rector;
- **Manager** – significant senior-level experience at an independent school;
- **Educator** – possesses an advanced degree and welcomes working with academic colleagues.

Personal Qualities

- **Integrity** – possesses high moral and ethical standards;
- **Personable and engaging** – a gifted communicator and advocate able to embrace and share St. Stephen’s history, traditions, and values, demonstrate an ability to listen, build trust, gather input, and engage in appropriate consensus building;
- **Trustworthy** – able to inspire the confidence and support of the entire St. Stephen’s community;
- **Compassionate** – understands and appreciates the life of children in a PreK to grade 5 environment;
- **Faithful** – embraces the mission and spirit of St. Stephen’s Episcopal Day School;
- **Approachable** – accessible, responsive, and highly visible;
- **Accountable** – places a high priority on clear communication on expectations, with a dedication to follow through with faculty, staff, and parents;
- **Culturally attuned** – can quickly appreciate the unique, lively, and complex nature of Miami;
- **Decisive** – is at ease in taking challenges head-on and making decisions firmly, fairly, and efficiently.



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Opportunities and Challenges

The new Head of School will be expected to:

- honor the school's mission, traditions, and core values, maintain a strong sense of community, successfully transition to being a visible and active participant in the school and greater Miami communities;
- ensure that the Episcopal identity of the school remains a priority in the school's mission and community life;
- connect well with other people and enjoy the interpersonal aspect of school leadership;
- listen carefully to a variety of viewpoints yet make clear decisions and take time to understand the culture of the school community;
- enhance and strengthen the academic program;
- recruit, hire, develop and retain the highest quality faculty and staff, promoting professional growth and opportunity, fostering a collaborative spirit, encouraging diversity and high levels of accountability;
- build a strong relationship with the Board of Trustees and assist in its development of goals for the school;
- effectively market the school's value proposition to compete in Miami's school market;
- give time and attention to the school's relationship with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church;
- understanding that the school is a mission of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, strives to build a collegial and collaborative relationship with a new Rector (or Priest in Charge), the Wardens, and Vestry of the Church.





How to Apply

The new Head of School will begin on July 1, 2024. Prospective candidates should submit the following materials in a single PDF document to the search consultants listed on the right. The deadline for application is August 15, 2023.

- Letter expressing interest in St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School, specifically addressing this position and school
- Resume (education and work experience)
- Statement of educational philosophy
- List of five professional references with contact information

St. Stephen's has a long-standing record of nondiscrimination in employment and opportunity because of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or age. It is the policy of St. Stephen's Episcopal Day School to: strictly follow personnel procedures that will ensure equal opportunity for all people without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, age, citizenship status, marital status, veteran status, ancestry, disability/handicap, veteran status, or any other protected status in accordance with the requirements of all applicable federal, state, and local laws, unless a particular status protected by federal, state, or local laws contradict the deeply held religious convictions of the School or Church.



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